

Be You In Focus webinar Q&A

Reflect, Respect, Respond when engaging with First Nations communities

Question:

Could you please share some resources we can use with children?

Question:

Is it possible to get some resources for primary schools on First Nations Peoples?

Answer:

Exploring the Be You [Culturally respectful engagement for learning communities resources](#) with your team is a great place to start. Before we look at resources for children and young people, it is a great idea to start with that reflection piece. Learning from these resources builds a stronger foundation that can directly contribute to improving confidence, understanding and respect for First Nations ways of knowing and being, along with knowing the protocols for the First Nations Peoples in your area.

Also, look at [Organisations for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples and cultures](#), which includes Koori Curriculum and many more. Reach out to your local First Nations community and begin building a reciprocal relationship. The local First Nations community may recommend place-based resources for your community. Understand though, that the reciprocal relationship, without expectations, must first be cultivated as that initial step.

Question:

I would like a list of simple Aboriginal words to share with our preschool children.

Answer:

There are hundreds of First Nations cultures and languages across Australia. Go to [Creating a stakeholder list](#) for tips on finding knowledge holders and organisations unique to your service's or school's local community. You could also look at [Organisations for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples and cultures](#).

Question:

How can secondary schools connect with an Elder of the land if we don't have a connection?

Question:

Sometimes it is difficult to find the "spokesperson" for the language group/community/country to be able to make the community link and to be able to engage the particular community.

Question:

I am wondering about schools with a small number of First Nations young people. How should we be approaching community to find out who are the 'right' people to consult with?

Answer:

The [Creating a stakeholder list](#) resource can support you in identifying key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations in your community:

You could also look at [Organisations for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples and Cultures](#).

Question:

Do you have information on the Torres Strait Islander perspectives?

Answer:

We have over 250 unique First Nations cultures, and even more First Nations language groups in Australia. First Nations communities are not homogenous, and every community has its own unique customs, histories, languages and culture. The Be You [Culturally respectful engagement for learning communities resources](#) were developed and written by First Nations peoples from a varying background of culture, languages, and places, including the Torres Strait Islander communities. The [AIATSIS](#) website is another site to explore different topics.

Question:

I work in an early learning playgroup. Do you have any suggestions for resources for children (0-5) for Acknowledgement of Country?

Answer:

Consider the learning resources from [Nurragunnawali](#). They have a module titled "[Caring for Country \(Early Learning\)](#)" that may support the development of your own Acknowledgement of Country. There is also a Play School episode: [Acknowledgement of Country](#) on ABC iView. Learn the name of the country you are on by visiting the [AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia](#).

Question:

I was wondering whether you are aware of any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth social and emotional learning programs for schools (weekly programs) that incorporate culture.

Answer:

The Healing Foundation, together with Emerging Minds, has launched a set of resources to improve Social and Emotional Wellbeing outcomes for First Nations children, ensuring they grow up culturally strong, healthy, happy and safe. You can find them here:

<https://www.worldvision.com.au/youngmob>

Question:

Is the resource available as a hard copy?

Answer:

The resources, [Culturally respectful engagement for learning communities](#), are not available in a hard copy but you can download the resources and print them.

Question:

I couldn't see a download for the AITSL parts. Also, do you have any thoughts about having them in languages other than English?

Answer:

The resources, [Culturally respectful engagement for learning communities](#), that the panel developed for Be You are downloadable to print out, but not the ones from AITSL. We are not aware of any plans for translation of these resources.

Question:

Is this webinar added to our NESAs hours automatically or do we add it ourselves?

Answer:

The webinar isn't NESAs accredited but you could use it for teacher-identified professional learning. Yes, you will need to add it yourself as teacher-identified professional learning.

Question:

In a post-referendum environment, is there anything we should be aware of in going on this journey and in applying these resources?

Answer:

Look at Reconciliation Australia's news article online – ['What next for RAP's after the referendum?'](#) along with ["Reconciliation after the Referendum."](#) The latter is a PDF document, and is based on a survey of leading RAP partners. It consists of a list of actions that organisations can take in response to the referendum grouped into two themes:

1. Supporting First Nations staff and stakeholders
2. Sustaining your commitment to reconciliation

Understand that whilst the First Nations Voice to Parliament in the constitution was unsuccessful, the sentiments of the Uluru Statement from the Heart are still actions we can strive towards as a community. There is much we can still do, and First Nations Peoples need meaningful allies more than ever.

Question:

Do you feel it is important to seek advice from families using the early learning service regarding First Nations Elders and community members with whom we should liaise?

Answer:

It would be best to develop relationships with your local First Nations Community. This might be reaching out to your local Elders and Community Spokespeople. You might choose to explore reputable online sites around significant First Nations dates and involve your local community in these activities. Reaching out to identified First Nations families who access your service should be done through the lens of building a relationship as it may be seen as tokenistic or not meaningful. Remember, reconciliation is everyone's business, and allyship is important as it supports First Nations Peoples with the cultural load they sometimes carry.

Question:

I'd love some strategies to use in my school context. I'm the only non-Indigenous educator who holds a qualification in Indigenous Education. I've been given a lead role in the cultural area this year; however, I find there is still resistance from my Principal to engage local community members in decision making, consultation etc. I am very fortunate to have a strong relationship with a traditional owner, an invaluable source of local knowledge, but it's not easy being the connection.

Answer:

Has your school developed an Acknowledgement of Country? Learning about the land that you are on, and the First Nations Peoples of your area, in addition to performing an Acknowledgement of Country at events such as gatherings and assemblies, may inspire others to walk with you on this journey.

Explore why you feel there is resistance in engaging with the local community. Sometimes having a respectful and open dialogue can help to understand the context around why this might be the case.

Question:

Do we need to get permission to translate words around the school into Kaurua i.e. the library, toilets etc.?

Answer:

First Nations Peoples and Communities are the holders of traditional languages. Language holds great significance in that it is connected to Country, Identity, Culture, Kinship and Community. I would recommend visiting the Curriculum section of the [Be You Protocols For Engagement with First Nations Communities Guide](#), as discussed in the webinar. Page 18, in particular, provides information around considerations on language use in education settings. Be aware that every community has varying protocols around language use, however it would be considered best practice to seek permission from cultural Custodians. While you are required to embed perspectives and celebrate culture in your curriculum, it should be informed by providing opportunities for First Nations Peoples to share their culture directly with children and young people, and this may mean building a relationship with your local custodians and inviting them to your setting. First Nations Peoples should always be remunerated for sharing their cultural skill and knowledge.

Question:

What is appropriate when addressing our community members: Aboriginal, First Nations or Indigenous etc.?

Answer:

It is best to ask the person or group you are engaging with as to how they prefer to be addressed. We would suggest referring to the resources, connecting with your local community and asking them the question.

These are some resources that may be helpful for you: [Protocols for culturally respectful engagement with First Nations communities](#); [Creating a stakeholder list](#) and [Organisations for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples and cultures](#).

Question:

Can we get a copy of the Zones of Regulation please?

Answer:

Unfortunately, we can't share this example of the Zones of Regulation as it has been created for a specific community.